



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 5, 2016

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PUBLIC WORKSHOP NEXT WEEK ON STUDY OF AQUIDNECK ISLAND'S DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES

PROVIDENCE – The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) will hold a public workshop next week to review a study that will guide improvements to Aquidneck Island's drinking water supplies. The Newport Water System – which provides water to Newport, Middletown, and Portsmouth – draws its supplies from nine reservoirs in Newport, Middletown, Portsmouth, Little Compton and Tiverton. While the System's treated drinking water remains safe, these source reservoirs commonly experience algal and cyanobacteria blooms, making treatment more complicated and costly. During the workshop, DEM will review and gather feedback on its study to address the underlying pollution causing these blooms.

WHAT: Review of [Source Water Protection Initiative for Newport's Drinking Water Reservoirs](#)

WHERE: Town Council Chambers
Middletown Town Hall
350 East Main Road
Middletown, Rhode Island

WHEN: Thursday, October 13, 2016 | 6:00 p.m.

DEM and RIDOH is conducting the *Source Water Protection Initiative for Newport's Drinking Water Reservoirs* study to guide efforts to restore water quality in the ponds, facilitating drinking water treatment and improving conditions for aquatic life. The study involves all nine supply reservoirs: South Easton Pond in Newport; North Easton Pond, Gardiner Pond, and Paradise Pond in Middletown; Lawton Valley Reservoir, St. Mary's Pond, and Sisson Pond in Portsmouth; Nonquit Pond in Tiverton; and Watson Reservoir in Little Compton.

As part of the study, an action plan will be developed for reducing the amount of pollution coming into these waters via stormwater runoff, animal waste, fertilizer, and other pollutants. DEM has conducted water quality studies of the nine reservoirs and two tributary streams, Maidford River and Paradise Brook. DEM will be reporting on the results of these studies at the workshop. This effort builds on previous water treatment investments made by the Newport Water System that have greatly enhanced drinking water quality. Nearly 70,000 people on Aquidneck Island rely on the Newport Water System for their drinking water.

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DEM has also been working closely with its partners on related projects designed to protect these valuable resources. Representatives from Newport Water, Town of Middletown, Aquidneck Land Trust, and Aquidneck Island Planning Commission will present updates on these efforts at next week's workshop.

For more information on the [*Source Water Protection Initiative for Newport's Drinking Water Reservoirs*](#), visit www.dem.ri.gov. Follow DEM on Facebook at www.facebook.com/RhodeIslandDEM or on Twitter (@RhodeIslandDEM) for timely updates.